

Public Aff

Reforms in examination

The word 'Reform' does not smell anything new to us; it is as old as civilization itself.

We speak of Land Reform, Education Reform, even some of us speak of Political Reform nowadays. In fact, the world today has seen so many reforms through ages.

Even though the word 'Reform' itself is very old, it always goes with a dynamic outlook. The House of Commons is regularly in session or the House of Representatives has no holiday. I think, what they care for is the examination of the present system of things and suggestion of any measure of reform, if found necessary. Unlike the British or Americans we have no platform where things can be debated and examined. That is why we need several Committees/Commissions that are formed time to time and reforms are sought to be introduced in dif-

ferent aspects of our life. But as our days at least several recommendations of the Committees/Commissions could not find the light of day; some of them were sent to cold storage for ever for reasons best known to the appropriate authority.

The same things happened with respect to education as we noticed in the past. We have not yet been able to formulate our education policy, though we have had much deliberations on it a few Task Forces formed, and the last committee had been formed for Examination Reforms which has been working for some time past but is yet to submit its recommendations to the authority. The formation of Examination Reforms Committee indicates that the high authority is seriously concerned about our present system of examination.

We know, the present system of examination is not totally an old one; so many changes have already been introduced in the existing one we inherited in 1971. No system is totally free from flaws.

Readers' Letters

What I want to say is, the need for any change must prove genuine. Before suggesting any change we must look for the reasons why the present system fails to produce the desired result. In short, we have to mark out the areas where it does not operate properly and identify agencies responsible for the failure.

There may be different opinions in this regard, but the fact remains that the execution of the system at the lowest level has led to the idea that the present system has become unworkable. But as I have said earlier, the present system itself cannot be rejected outright, because every system is supposed to admit of some loopholes and we need to find those out.

At the ways how dif-

ferent Public Examinations are conducted in various institutions — schools and colleges (these exclude those institutions in some big cities and the reputed ones) will clarify my above observations.

The examination centres, in most cases, cannot overcome the undue influences of influential quarters. The so-called student union leaders in various institutions very often through their activities in the examination hall premises prove more powerful than the invigilators (in the negative sense). The invigilators do not dare to ask them to be off (through some of invigilators do really feel their presence as something evil) because the head of the institution does not feel like doing so for obvious reasons (to keep their chair free from troubles). The local

administration does not always handle it with due attention; they consider it as their secondary duty.

Besides, the institutions conducting the examination tend to think that the administrative interference is rather an intrusion. Above all, the Board of Education or the Ministry itself has no adequate arrangement to check any sort of malpractice or mismanagement that directly goes against the sanctity of examination hall.

The matter of adopting unfair means in the examination halls has probably been the greatest concern of the authority that lies behind the thoughts on Examination Reforms. But whatever reforms are introduced and however excellent these are, the agencies responsible for their execution from the grassroots level to the top must have a change in their attitude towards examination.

The local administration must be ready to work with education and consider the

conduct of examination as their primary responsibility. The Board or the Ministry must care to engage enough of personnel to supervise each and every centre of examination, instead of sending inspection teams once or twice during the whole period of examination.

One should not forget that the techniques of adopting unfair means has now changed. Even if one does not take an incriminating paper with him/her in the examination hall, he/she can easily copy from the bench where it was copied earlier; they use the walls or fences, above all, the urinals and toilets. Still a lot of centres are there where the female candidates are a privileged class. Last, but not the least, the enactments as regards examination offence have to be enforced properly.

QAZI MD. AKRAMUL HUQ, Lecturer in English, Bhawal Badre Alam Govt. College, Gazipur, Gazipur.